

# VIOLENCE FREE EDUCATION TRAINING AND OUTREACH



## Supreme Court rules on The Town of Castle Rock versus Jessica Gonzales

On June 27, 2005 the United States Supreme Court decided that Jessica Gonzales, the mother of three children who were slain by her ex-husband, could not sue the Town of Castle Rock, Colorado for failure to uphold the conditions of the protective order she had sought against her ex-husband, Simon Gonzales. Gonzales claimed that the Castle Rock Police Department had failed to protect her and her children from her ex-husband by not enforcing the protective order. Tragically, Simon Gonzales kidnapped their three daughters, ages seven, nine and ten and murdered them. Ms. Gonzales claimed that she pleaded with the Castle Rock Police department to help her find her daughters to no avail. Eventually, her ex-husband, Simon Gonzales drove to the police department ten hours after the kidnapping and opened fire on the station. Simon Gonzales was killed in the fight and the three girls were later found dead in the back of his truck.

Ms. Gonzales had filed a law suit against the city of Castle Rock citing that the police had failed to

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abide by the Colorado mandatory arrest law that required law enforcement to use “every reasonable means possible” to enforce a protective order (Family Violence Prevention Fund). The Tenth Circuit Court of the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled six to five that Gonzales could sue the city for failure to protect. However, the city appealed citing that individuals cannot invoke the right to law enforcement. The United States Supreme Court agreed with this assumption and in a vote of seven to two, the Supreme Court ruled that Gonzales could not sue. The majority of the Justices in their opinions ruled that victims of domestic violence do not have a federal constitutional right to due process in law enforcement. The dissenting opinion of Justices Stevens and Ginsburg argued that the right to protection by law enforcement for victims of domestic violence is no less viable or concrete than other public services such as education.

### Implications of the Gonzales Case

The Supreme Court ruling on the case of the Jessica Gonzales versus the Town of Castle Rock has spurred many responses from the local community of Castle Rock, Colorado with reverberations throughout the domestic violence community. According to the Town of Castle Rock, the police did respond to Jessica Gonzales’ pleas for help. According to Castle Rock Police department documentation the police did respond

and used enforcement by “every means possible.” Town officials maintained that the outcome of the case could not have been predicted stating that the police could not have known Simon Gonzales’ intentions. Unfortunately this case only highlights the reality that victims of domestic violence are at the most risk when they have either left the relationship or sought external means of

Please see *Implications* on page 4

## Victim Rights Fairs Proves to be a Success

On April fifteenth and sixteenth V.E.T.O. organized two Victim Rights Fairs to honor National Victim Rights week. The fairs were held at the Kingston and Hanover Malls and proved to be a success. Tammy Spinney, Outreach Coordinator for the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office organized the event which brought members of V.E.T.O and local police departments together to share their resources and information with the community.

Participants included Brockton Family and Community Resources, High Point, the Norwell and Hanover Police Departments, Plymouth County Sheriff Joseph McDonald's Department, Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, South Shore Women's Center and Womansplace Crisis Center. Brochures, handouts, bookmarks and other resources were made available to the public. One of the goals of the fairs was to inform the public about Victim Rights Week and what resources and services are available in Plymouth County.

Highlights from the fairs included fingerprinting for children which was offered by the Plymouth County Sheriff's Department, the Clothesline Project, which was hung in honor of



*The Clothesline Project was put on display in honor of victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual*

victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and the Hanover and Norwell police departments distributed Junior Officer Badges, Frisbees and other items for children.

The tables were designed to provide resource and information to the public and each table was staffed by agency personnel to provide further information regarding services and resources in Plymouth County. Pertinent information regarding sexual assault and domestic violence resources was made available to the public.

The event proved to be successful and a special thank you goes out to both the Hanover and Kingston Malls for their generosity in providing the space and assistance in making the fairs possible.



*Members of the Plymouth County Sheriff's Department offered fingerprinting to children who came to the mall.*



*Maura Landry from Womansplace Crisis Center*

## The Coordinated Community Response Corner

On June 23, 2005 the Hingham Area Coordinated Community Response held a luncheon at Bridgeman's Restaurant in Hull to discuss the accomplishments for the first year of the grant and goals for the second year of the grant.

Sergeant Dale Shea of the Hull Police Department organized the location of the meeting and was instrumental in bringing new members to the table including Paula F. Delaney, Superintendent of Hull Public Schools and Sandi Grauds, from the Department of Public Health in Hull. One of the goals of the CCR is to increase membership and create a network of many community agencies and organizations.

The accomplishments that were discussed included the completion of all four trainings for the six police departments involved in the grant. Almost every police officer in the six towns, Hanover, Hull,



Hingham, Norwell, Rockland and Scituate attended the trainings which were held at the Rockland Golf Club. The trainings focused on police response to domestic violence and sexual assault, batterer intervention, the role of the advocates, a legal update and identifying the predominant aggressor. The next four trainings are being planned for the early 2006.

Courtney Cahill, Director of the Domestic Violence Unit for the Plymouth County District

*Please see Coordinated Community Response on page 4*

## Domestic Violence in Older Women

By Marianne Shean

Approximately 60,000 women over the age of fifty-seven years old live in Plymouth County. According to the Family Violence Prevention Fund one in every four women in the age group of fifty-seven and older are victims of domestic violence. Based on this statistical information the South Shore Women's Center has estimated that approximately 15,000 older women living in Plymouth County are being abused or have been abused at some point in their lives. To address the serious issues of domestic violence in the lives of older women, South Shore Women's Center has created the South Shore Women's Center Older Women's Program. This program addresses the specific needs of older women and has played an integral role in the South Shore Women's Center programming for the past twelve years.

The South Shore Women's Center is a non-profit organization that has been providing services to victims of domestic violence who reside in the sixteen towns of Plymouth County since 1979. The services include a twenty-four hotline, emergency safe homes, individual counseling, support groups, court based legal advocacy, civilian police advocacy, referral, community outreach and emergency food and clothing to battered women and their children.

Domestic violence against a woman at any age has devastating effects, in many cases robbing the victim of her health, dignity, self esteem, confidence and sometimes her life. Domestic violence against older women can be more complex. Many older women have spent decades with an abusive partner and have very little control over their own home, finances and health

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protection.

The Supreme Court decision should not alter or change the positive work that has been accomplished in the past decade. For over a decade law enforcement, the courts, domestic violence advocates and community agencies have been working together to forge a comprehensive and coordinated response to domestic violence. The Supreme Court ruling was procedural and focused on the constitutionality of an individual's right to invoke the right to law enforcement.

*Coordinated Community Response  
Corner... Continued from page 3*

Attorney's Office gave an update on the statistics for the past year. Ms. Cahill reported that since October, and with the notable additions of the Rockland, Hull and Hanover police departments to the grant, the number of reported incidents have markedly increased. The number of domestic violence incidents that have been reported to the Scituate Police department have increased by over one hundred percent since Officer Suzanne McDonough became the domestic violence officer for the police department under the grant. The increase does not indicate that more domestic violence crimes are occurring in the Scituate or in any other towns, rather the growth in incidents may be due to the fact that more individuals are calling and that the incidents are also being coded as domestic violence. One positive outcome has been that domestic violence advocates have been able to contact more victims within the community and are offering resources and services that the victim may not have been previously aware of.

The development of standardized police protocols for the six police departments was also discussed. The protocol was designed by Womansplace staff; Maura Landry, Sharon Washwell and Katie Callahan of Brockton Family and Community Resources and Sandra Blatchford, the grant manager. Sandra has completed a write up of the protocol and it will be released to the departments by September 2005.

Additionally two domestic violence brochures

Many domestic violence advocates have articulated their disappointment in the ruling fearing that this will prove to be a set back. The Supreme Court decision can act as an opportunity for law enforcement, domestic violence advocates and community leaders to continue their efforts to protect the rights of domestic violence victims. The coordinated response should not be altered by one ruling. This ruling may prove to be used as a test of our resolve to work towards developing policies that will become inherent to our responses to violence.



were distributed to the attendees and a laminated police arrest check list was handed out to the various police departments. The brochures describe domestic violence, sexual assault and teen dating violence. The teen dating violence brochure will be distributed to the local high schools in the fall.

The distribution of the teen dating violence brochures will be part of an effort to organize the *White Ribbon Campaign* in the local high schools. The *White Ribbon Campaign* was developed in Canada, after a gunman shot and killed several students at a nursing school. A group of men organized the campaign with the message that men should become actively involved in ending violence against women. The campaign has become quite successful and for the past few years, Hingham High School has organized the campaign to recruit young men to take a stand against violence against women. The success has led other towns, such as Hull, Norwell, Hanover, Rockland and Scituate to become involved in organizing the same campaign in their schools.

For more information or to get involved in the White Ribbon Campaign or the CCR please contact Sandra Blatchford at 781-630-2959.



## Dating Violence is “Prevalent”

According to the Family Violence Prevention Fund, a new survey sponsored by Liz Claiborne and conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited revealed that abuse in teenage relationships is prevalent. The study supported previous surveys that have indicated that domestic violence is not limited to adult relationships. The findings further support the need to educate our youth about healthy relationships, unhealthy relationships and the realities of abuse.

The survey revealed the need to educate our youth and work towards ending domestic violence in all age groups.

### Survey Results

- More than half of teens (57%) know friends or peers who have been physically, sexually or verbally abused.
- Thirteen percent of teenage girls who are in a relationship say that they were physically hurt or hit by their partner.
- One in four teenage girls (26%) in a relationship reports enduring or repeated verbal abuse.
- One in four teenage girls who have been in a relationship says they have been pressured to perform oral sex or engage in intercourse.

*For more information on teen dating violence you may visit:*

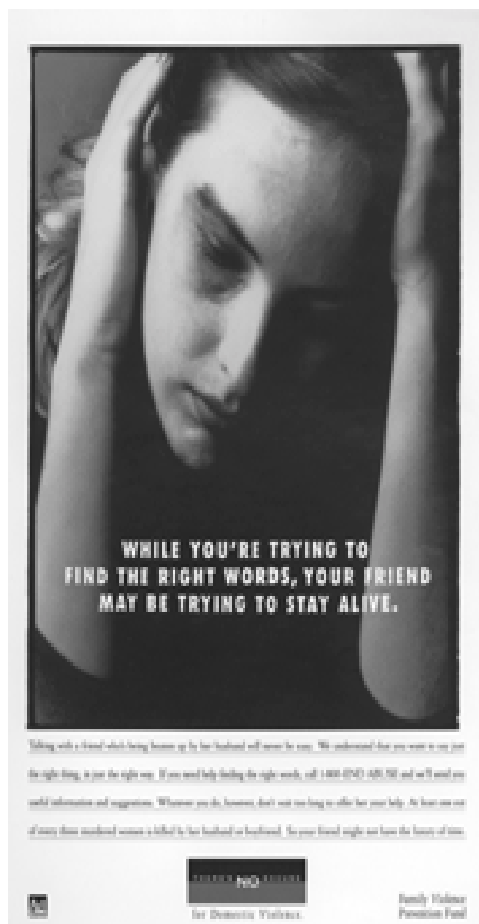
*Liz Claiborne's website at*

*<http://www.loveisnotabuse.com>*

*Womansplace at 508-588-8255*

*South Shore Women's Center at 781-740-5665*

*Brockton Family and Community Resources at 508-583-6498.*



## Employers Who Make a Difference

According to a 2002 study conducted by Liz Claiborne, Inc. on Employers and Domestic Violence, corporate leaders stated that they saw domestic violence as a “major problem that affects employees.” Liz Claiborne, Inc. which has been recognized for their commitment to ending domestic violence is just one of the large corporations that have joined forces with other employers to work to end domestic violence.

Domestic violence is a serious social problem, and with nearly one third of all women reporting being physically or sexually assaulted by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime, employers, friends, family and the community need to work collectively to end domestic violence. Beyond the ethical reasons for both large and small employers to become involved with ending domestic violence in the lives of their employees are the facts that domestic violence cost employers over four billion dollars a year (according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control).

Employers Against Domestic Violence (EADV) is one group that has formed with the common goal of ending domestic violence and they have been effective in creating domestic violence policies for both the victim and the abuser. There are over one hundred employers in Massachusetts who are addressing the affects that domestic violence has on their workplaces. They are members of Employers Against Domestic Violence, a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate employers, train businesses and help disseminate information about EADV. For more information about the EADV please contact Courtney Cahill at 508-894-6322.

Larger corporations have also become involved in preventive measures for victims in the community. Recently Charming Shoppes, the corporate office of Lane Bryant; Catherines and Fashion Bug have created campaigns to address emotional abuse. Charming Shoppes distributed a mailing that was included with their store coupons. It



was a small booklet and letter that addressed the realities of emotional abuse. The booklet described emotional abuse and asked women to join forces and collectively work together to empower women and others to help stop domestic violence. The letter stated that “with all that is going on in the world today, we should not lose sight of the violence that is occurring in homes across America.” Domestic violence is a pervasive problem, one that erodes the victim’s self-esteem, teaches children to condone or accept violence and undermines the fabric of our society.

In the wake of the recent Supreme Court decision of *Gonzales versus Castle Rock Colorado* it might be easy to become disheartened. However, the great strides that have been made in the past twenty five years cannot be minimized or forgotten. In the late 1970’s, the Battered Women’s Movement in the United States began. Since that time there have been many changes in responses and attitudes towards domestic violence. While stereotypes or victim blaming still occur, the mission to end domestic violence and create violence free homes has not been forgotten. Charming Shoppes and other committed corporations are an example of the strides that have been made.

Fifteen years ago, this letter and many other corporate responses and activities would not have occurred. The voices of victims and those who have worked in the field were just beginning to be heard. The support and preventive measures that are occurring now are processes of change.

The Supreme Court ruling can be perceived as a step backwards, but the commitment of organizations such as EADV are positive reminders that one step backwards is merely a test of our commitment to move two feet forward.



*Domestic Violence in Older**Women....Continued from Page 3.*

insurance. The abusive situation is a deeply held secret, not only in their family but in the community as well. Because of shame and fear of reprisal many older women isolate themselves from their families, friends and communities. Other barriers experienced by older women include intense resistance and lack of support by family members when an older victim decides to leave the abusive relationship.

Sometimes their own children will turn against her and question her emotional state. Older women frequently have little or no income and because of their age and lack of young children as dependents, may not qualify for public assistance or housing services. If they are eligible it may require extensive advocacy within these systems to receive the requested services. Other barriers to leaving may include a sense of responsibility for their abusers. They may be the primary caretaker of their aging abusive partner and feel that it is their duty to stay. Conversely, it may be the abusive partner who is their primary caretaker thus increasing the risk of isolation from family and friends. Sadly, many older victims of domestic violence remain unaware of the resources and services that are available.

An integrated and coordinated response to older victims is essential to address the effects of physical, verbal, emotional, sexual and other kinds of abuse. The program is designed to attend to the unique needs of women aged fifty-seven or older who do not know where to turn for help or how to break the cycle of violence that has encompassed their lives for so long.

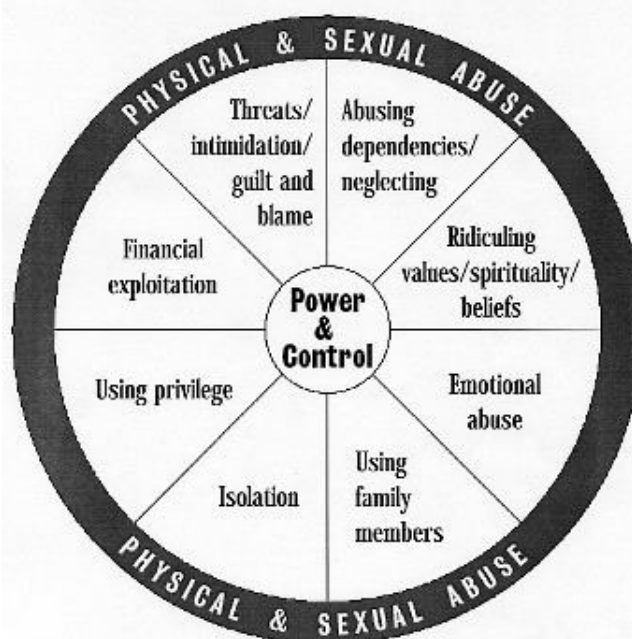
The women are met with a caring and compassionate response by staff at South Shore Women's Center. The Older Women's program gives women the opportunity to receive the support, counseling and advocacy they may need to re-build their self esteem. Through individual counseling and group process an older woman might experience personal empowerment for the first time in her life. The counselor will provide her with the tools to help her navigate through the labyrinth of available systems, such as court based advocacy, housing assistance and other important public assistance agencies. The counselor/advocate offers individual and group support as well as ongoing services for women with varying needs. The weekly support groups, which are offered at several locations, offer convenience, anonymity and safety for clients.

Community awareness about domestic violence within the older population of women is essential. Counselor's work within the community by participating in the Plymouth Area Domestic Violence Roundtable/Coordinated Community Response, which is chaired by South Shore Women's Center, TRIAD and SAGE. The Center offers outreach education to the local Council on Aging, Senior Centers, healthcare providers and nursing homes in an effort to continue to raise awareness in the community.

*In Plymouth County, an estimated 15,000 women aged 57 and over are living or have lived in a violent relationship*

For more information about our confidential services, to schedule an intake, or to find out about volunteer opportunities, please call South Shore Women's Center at: 781-582-0078 or 888-746-2664

### Family Violence in Later Life



Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
307 S. Paterson St., Suite 2, Madison, WI 53703  
(608) 255-0539 / FAX: (608) 255-1500  
This diagram is based on the Power and Control/Equality wheel  
developed by the Domestic Violence Intervention Project, Duluth, MN

Visit our website at:

[www.pcsdma.org/htm.veto](http://www.pcsdma.org/htm.veto)

*You must be the change  
you wish to see in the  
world.*

*~ Mahatma Gandhi ~*

**Thank You!**

*The South Shore Women's Center would like to thank  
everyone who helped make the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala  
on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005 such a wonderful event!  
We appreciate your support and dedication  
and hope to see you again next year!*

We would like to thank Sheriff Joseph  
McDonald for the use of the  
Inmates Print Shop.

